



## **Southern Region Women's Retreat - Early Bird Registration is due by September 15.**

[Click here for more information the SECUCC website and to register online](#)

## **Living Our Faith in a Multi-Faith World - Retired Servants Event Registration Deadline September 26**

[Click here for more information and registration on the SECUCC website](#)

### **We Need Your Help with our 50th Anniversary Commemorative Calendar**

2016 marks the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ. The year was 1966! To help commemorate our anniversary, the Conference will be publishing a Special Edition 2016 Calendar, for purchase. In the calendar, will be photographs and special dates from all 52 of our Conference churches. **And we need your help.** We specifically need a high resolution photograph of your church (in jpeg format) and important dates in your church's history. Important dates could include your church's founding, pastor's birthdays, ordination anniversaries, event dates in the life of your church, etc. All photographs and dates must be emailed to Debbie Spearman at [dspearman@secucc.org](mailto:dspearman@secucc.org) no later than October 12, 2015.



We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2015. Each month, we will publish a weekly list for the month and post them weekly on our

Facebook page. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers.

- [Click here to download the September and October prayer list](#)
- [Click here to download the entire 2015 prayer list](#)

#### Highlights for September:

- **Scott Williamson** was ordained and installed at United Church of Cookeville (Tennessee) on August 29.
- Prayers for **Michael McCaulley** who is hospitalized. Michael is a member of Peace Congregational in Clemson, SC and a Member in Discernment.
- **Decatur UCC** is the newest Open and Affirming Church in the United Church of Christ as of July 31, 2015. They are number 1307 in the list.

#### Churches in Transition:

Oak Grove Congregational Christian, Pine Mountain Georgia; Church of the Savior, Alpharetta Georgia; Peace Congregational UCC, Clemson South Carolina; Pensacola UCC, Pensacola Florida; Pilgrim Congregational UCC, Chattanooga Tennessee; Brookmeade Congregational UCC, Nashville Tennessee; Howard Congregational UCC, Nashville Tennessee.

## Fall 2015 Conference Grants

Get ready churches....September 15th thru October 31st marks the next application cycle for Fall 2015 Conference grants. During this time congregations may apply in 3 different ways:

1. Online at [secucc.org/giving/capital-campaign-grant-application/](http://secucc.org/giving/capital-campaign-grant-application/)
2. Mailing a paper application to the Southeast Conference office
3. Emailing an electronic application to [dspearman@secucc.org](mailto:dspearman@secucc.org)

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Reports from Churches that Received Conference Grants

### FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH , MONTGOMERY *Conference Grant received for A COMMUNITY BACK TO SCHOOL PROJECT*

Pastor Wendy Coleman reports that Saturday, July 25, 2015, was an exciting day at First Congregational Christian Church in Montgomery, Alabama. For the second year, the church hosted the Centennial Hill Back-to-School Bash. Last year's event provided 100 book bags with supplies to members of the community in a drive-through event. But the 2015 community connection event was even more impacting in part to a grant provided by the Southeast Conference of the UCC. Over 200 people were served and received lunch and 250 book bags were given away to help students of all ages start the school year off right. According to Morningview Elementary principal Mrs. Kenyetta Miller, "Some children come to school with very, very little. A new book bag will be worth a million dollars to them."



### CENTRAL CONGREGATIONAL UCC, ATLANTA *Conference Grant received for NPR ADVERTISING*

Our spring grant from the Southeast Conference was used to purchase 80 advertising slots on local NPR Atlanta affiliate, 90.1. reports Rev. Lacey Brown, Central's pastoral fellow. Our fifteen second ad said the following, "Support for WABE



comes from Central UCC, an open and affirming, justice and peace seeking, progressive Christian church where faith is a journey, and thinking is encouraged. Near Clairmont and 85. More at Central dash U-C-C dot org." Preliminary results from our ads are positive. We gained many Sunday visitors who revealed to us that they had heard our ad on NPR. We are grateful for the grant from the conference and we hope to continue our ads with WABE in the fall.

#### **MIDWAY CONGREGATIONAL UCC**

*Conference Grant received for IMPROVING TECHNOLOGY*

Claire Robinson, Moderator, is excited about their funding opportunity from the Conference. She reports they are currently engaged in pricing negotiations for the leasing of a new copier. A new computer should be delivered by the end of August. A team has been formed to ensure this project is moving along and completing the identified tasks. The team is also looking at various types of marketing items to utilize in their outreach ministry and efforts within the local community. "We look forward to providing more details in the future. Keep Midway Congregational Church, UCC in your prayers as we continue to "Move Forward", says Claire.

Next month's newsletter will feature updates from Peace Congregational UCC and Beloved Community UCC.



## **The United Church of Huntsville UCC in Partnership with Neighbor Build Labyrinth**

The United Church of Huntsville United Church of Christ and its neighbor St. Stephen's Episcopal Church are nearing the completion of a handicapped accessible labyrinth they want to share with their community. The Rev. Susan Sloan, Rector of St. Stephen's and Rev. Robert Hurst, Pastor of United Church are proud of the ability of their two congregations to work together on a cooperative ecumenical project intended to reach out to their community.

June Boutwell, Conference Minister of the Southeast Conference United Church of Christ will visit Huntsville on September 20, 2015 to preach at the morning service and to participate in the dedication of the Labyrinth at the close of the 11:00 a.m. worship service.

Read more: [secucc.org/united-church-huntsville-ucc-builds-labyrinth/](http://secucc.org/united-church-huntsville-ucc-builds-labyrinth/)



## Jottings from June: "A Season of Creation"

Season of Creation is a liturgical movement that began over 10 years ago. I keep hoping that more Protestant traditions in the United States will put some emphasis on this idea. Genesis names humankind as the stewards of God's creation. In fact, there was a resolution at General Synod addressing space junk as a creation stewardship issue. I encourage you to go to the website at [seasonofcreation.com](http://seasonofcreation.com) to read more about the history of this movement and to look at resources for the liturgical calendar. Given the renewed attention to environmental concerns including Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment, I think we need to pay attention to what scripture tells us about our responsibilities as children of God and of the earth and to honor all creatures and the world around us as co-inhabitants of the cosmos.



Part of that honoring of co-inhabitants is renewed attention to how we welcome and are in relationship with our neighbors. The African Methodist Episcopal Council of Bishops has declared September 6 as a Day of Confession, Repentance, Prayer, and Commitment to End Racism. Please see a larger article in this newsletter.

We are focusing renewed attention on the issue of racism in the United Church of Christ. Last month the Conference newsletter lifted up August 9 as a day of prayer for racial justice. There are two resource sites I encourage you to look at on the UCC website: [ucc.org/sacred-conversation](http://ucc.org/sacred-conversation) and [ucc.org/justice\\_racism](http://ucc.org/justice_racism).

The Friday night speaker at the Alabama-Tennessee-Mississippi Association Meeting on October 2-3 will be Traci Blackmon, pastor of Christ the King UCC in Florissant, Missouri. Rev. Blackmon serves on the Ferguson Commission and has been a key leader in the Black Lives Matter movement. I think it is important for us all to educate ourselves and to engage in deep and meaningful dialogue about the realities of racism in our culture, our communities, and our churches. None of us is immune to the effects of this deep rooted aspect of our lives together. This needs to be part of our life together as a Conference as we look to who God is calling us to be as we witness to our neighbors and our communities.

## Save the Date

**October 2-3 - Alabama-Tennessee Assoc. Annual Meeting**  
Covenant Community UCC, Center Point, AL

**October 5-7 - Retired Servants Retreat**  
Blowing Rock Conference Center, NC

**October 16-18 - Southern Region Women's Retreat**  
Sumatanga Retreat Center, Gallant, AL

**July 26-29, 2016 - National Youth Event in Orlando, Florida**



## Alabama-Tennessee Association Annual Meeting

We invite you to our Annual Meeting in Centerpoint, AL at Covenant Community Church United Church of Christ. Our meeting will begin on Friday, October 2, and conclude on Saturday afternoon, October 3, 2015. "A Conversation on Race" is our theme for this gathering.

On Friday evening, our keynote speaker is the Rev. Traci Blackmon, pastor of Christ the King Church UCC in Florissant, Missouri who is a voice for justice in Ferguson, MO and beyond. Our praise and worship will be led by the pastor of Covenant Community the Rev. R.J. Finney and

their worship team. On Saturday, we will have workshop discussions on race for this "kairos" moment [appointed time] and continue the business of the AL/TN/MS Association.

For details and a registration form, please contact Mr. Joe Griffin at Covenant Community Church UCC, 2205 3rd St NE, Center Point, AL 35215. Phone 205-599-3363.

## Real Inspiration Ministry Celebrates their 7th Anniversary

October 9, 10 and 11, 2015 will bring praise and celebration yet again to Real Inspiration Ministry Inc. (RIM) as they celebrate their seventh year anniversary of reaching the masses with a real message that matters to real people! You're invited to take part in this special weekend of celebration with them. Featured guest speaker is Rev. Dr. Yvette A. Flunder, and Presiding Prelate of The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries as well as Senior Pastor/Founder of the City of Refuge UCC in Oakland California. Bishop Flunder is a well sought after Speaker, Singer, Author and Activist.

Read more: [secucc.org/real-inspiration-ministry-celebrates-their-7th-anniversary/](http://secucc.org/real-inspiration-ministry-celebrates-their-7th-anniversary/)

## Sarah Kim's Sabbatical Report

Rev. Dr. Sarah Kim, our Executive Director of Theological Education and Dean of PATHWAYS, recently returned from a well-deserved sabbatical. Sarah spent six weeks in her native South Korea.

This long-planned trip was her opportunity to connect with South Korea's language, culture, and people in order to finish a book she had set out to write about Eastern understanding of nature, life, and human destiny.

Read about her fascinating journey on our website: [secucc.org/roots-reflections-and-the-future/](http://secucc.org/roots-reflections-and-the-future/).



## News from around the UCC

### General Synod connects Southeast and Hawaii Conferences

An excerpt from an article in the latest Hawaii Conference newsletter appears below. The Southeast Conference delegate modeled extravagant hospitality which reflects the wonderful values in the Southeast Conference: *"While at our table before the last plenary, a delegate from the Southeast Conference came over and asked me who organized our table and all the goodies, candies that we shared. I told her that it was mainly our staff and some who were able to contribute. She said that we are so generous and that when they go to Synod in Baltimore, they will follow our good example."* Iese Tuuao, Hawaii Conference Council Chair

### Still Speaking Worship Event Offered Online

The Faith Formation Team of Local Church Ministries is offering an online opportunity for United Church of Christ churches to enter into a panel discussion on "Creating Sacred Space" for worship. This panel of liturgical art specialists will be discussing the importance of the worship space and offer ways to use it creatively in order to enhance worship.

The event will stream live at 11 AM (EDT) on October 27, 2015 from the Amistad Chapel at the Church House in Cleveland, Ohio at [ucc.org/creating\\_sacred\\_space](http://ucc.org/creating_sacred_space). This event will be recorded and posted at this link for later viewing. Visit [ucc.org/creating\\_sacred\\_space](http://ucc.org/creating_sacred_space) or contact Rev. Ivy Beckwith at [beckwithi@ucc.org](mailto:beckwithi@ucc.org) with any questions.

### Day of Confession, Repentance, Prayer, and Commitment to End Racism



Second, Sunday, September 6th, we will join with the African Methodist Episcopal Church and many faith traditions as the AME has declared Sunday, September 6th as a "Day of Confession, Repentance, Prayer, and Commitment to end Racism." Every church, temple, synagogue, mosque and place of worship is asked to focus on race and ask every preacher discuss race and be reminded and that out of one blood, God created all of us to dwell together in unity.

## Opening for Director of Music Ministries

Pleasant Hill Community Church -- an Open and Affirming, Whole Earth, Just Peace, Global Mission congregation of the United Church of Christ -- seeks a part-time (15-20 hours per week) Director of Music Ministries to lead our vibrant music program. \$15-20,000 annual salary and negotiable benefits. The position involves working with our Worship Team to plan creative, meaningful services, serving as organist for Sunday morning worship, conducting the choir and handbells, and recruiting and rehearsing with instrumental and vocal soloists and ensembles. Contact Rev. Glenna Shepherd at phcc@frontiernet.net or call 931-277-3193. [See full description here.](#)

## Opportunities for Continuing Education

### September 15: Annual Sexual Misconduct Prevention Seminar for Clergy and Other Church Professionals

- You're invited to the annual "Sexual Misconduct Prevention Seminar for Clergy and Other Church Professionals" led by Rev. Laurie and Rev. Steve Hill. It will be on Tuesday, September 15 from 8:30am - 3:00pm at Farragut Presbyterian Church in Farragut TN. Bring \$5 for lunch. Register and purchase \$15.00 training booklet at: <http://tinyurl.com/2015-PET-Misconduct-Prevention>.

### November 3-7: Emotional Intelligence in Moravia, NY

- The Upper New York Conference of the United Methodist Church invites you to a training workshop in emotional intelligence by staff of the Alban Institute Upper New York. The five-day workshop is scheduled for November 3-7, 2014 at Casowasco Camp and Retreat Center in Moravia, New York. [Visit the UNY UMC website for details.](#)

### November 16-20: Mediation Skills Training in Columbia, SC

- Consider attending the Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders in Columbia, SC from November 16-20. This training is open to church leaders in all areas of ministry, and is valuable for dealing with current conflict as well as learning to be proactive so that conflict can be transformative. Register now and save \$100. [Visit the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center website for details.](#)

### Fall 2015: Shalom Center for Continuing Education Short Courses

The following Short Courses are available this autumn in Pleasant Hill, Tennessee:

- **Exploring Economics** - Six 90 minute sessions weekly, beginning Wednesday, September 23 at 3:30 pm. Leader, Susan Pummill
- **Music for Social Change** - Five 90 minute sessions weekly, beginning Thursday, September 15 at 4:00 pm. Facilitator, Rev. Glenna Shepherd
- **Progressive Spirituality Perspectives** - Six 90 minute sessions weekly, beginning Monday, September 21 at 6:00pm. Course Leader, Mark Canfield, Ph.D.

More details available at <http://www.shalomcenterpleasanthill.com/p/new.html>

## Widening the Welcome 2015: Inclusion for All National Conference

The 5th National UCC Widening the Welcome: Inclusion for All Conference will be September 24-26, Hartford, CT. These Conferences have been a sign of the movement in our UCC to address concerns and issues around disabilities, mental health challenges, and cognitive/developmental

disabilities. Our hope is for our congregations to be inclusive of persons who are living with these life experiences.

Along with theological insights there will be practical applications and networking with others from across the country. There will be inspiration through worship, music, and storytelling. You are invited to attend and to send the information along to others. This Conference is hosted by the UCC Disabilities Ministries and the UCC Mental Health Network.



**Great news! The hotel rate at the Windsor/Hartford Marriott has been reduced for the Widening the Welcome conference! The new rate is only \$104 (plus taxes) and includes breakfast. If you have reservations, this rate will automatically be adjusted - there is no need to do anything. Breakfast is included in the daily rate each day. No additional charge. Good for up to 2 people per room. Therefore, you will not have to pay the extra \$10 per day for breakfast! The lower rate, taxes and breakfast equals a total savings per day of \$38 (\$10 more if an additional person is sharing your room.)**

<http://www.moredomainsforless.com/wideningthewelcome/>

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## **Correct Address for Pension Boards Payments**

The Conference Office has been notified by the Pension Boards that some employers have been sending payments for pension and insurance coverage directly to the Pension Boards office in New York. Payments are processed through our bank, The Northern Trust Company, at their lockbox address in Chicago, Illinois. When checks are received in New York, they must be forwarded to Northern Trust, causing a delay in payments being applied to accounts. We are asking every church to check the information in your accounts payable to the Pension Boards to make sure that you are remitting the payments to the proper address.

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